

VA Portland Health Care System

3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd.
 Portland, OR 97239

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Produced by the VAPORHCS
 Public Affairs Office

QUESTIONS / COMMENTS ??

Please email us at...

VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov

or call 503-402-2975

Lincoln's Promise (VA Mission Statement)

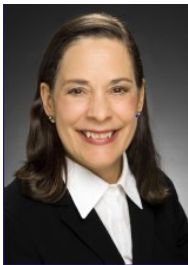
"To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's Veterans.

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For **VAPORHCS Events and Classes**—got to the VAPORHCS Web page...
www.portland.va.gov/calendar.asp

Message from the Director



Joanne M. Krumberger
 Director, VA Portland Health Care System

This month ends VAPORHCS' first full year of implementation of the Choice Program. This opportunity for Veterans to choose to have their care in the community has no doubt been important, but not without challenges. We continue to make steady improvements to provide high quality, timely, patient-centric care for all Veterans, whether it is at the VA or with our community partners. Here are a few facts regarding the utilization of the Choice Program within VAPORHCS:

- To date, our staff have reached out directly by phone to more than 12,700 Veterans who were identified as eligible for Choice; we wanted to make sure these Veterans were offered and understood their options to have care in the community.
- More than 8,600 VAPORHCS Veterans have chosen to have their care through the Choice Program — we have one of the highest utilization rates in the VA for Choice.
- Our Electronic Waitlists have decreased by more than half this past year and continue to decline.
- VAPORHCS has engaged in a new care routing process that will help shape the demand for care from outside our catchment area and assist all of our eligible Veterans to receive care closer to home.

We will continue to look closely at our processes and make necessary changes to ensure we are doing all we can to provide the best care in as timely a manner as possible. We will keep engaging and informing you as the VA Choice Program evolves. Should you have any ques-

tions or ideas regarding Choice or Purchased Care, please call the VAPORHCS **Purchased Care team at (360) 759-1674**. We appreciate your feedback and want to help you get the care you have earned and deserve.

Flu season is upon us and the VA wants to ensure you get the protection you need. The VA Retail Immunization Care Coordination Program paved the way for a private-public retail pharmacy partnership to offer Veteran patients ready-access to no-cost flu shots during the 2014 - 2015 flu shot season. To continue to support access to care, the VHA Office of Informatics and Analytics and Walgreens will again partner to offer Veterans the option to obtain their no-cost flu shot at a local Walgreens from August 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016.

More details about how you can get a flu shot is on [page 6](#) of this newsletter. Please note that Veterans must have their VA ID card and a valid photo ID and use Group Code #5933XBAYV. These and other details about the VA Retail Immunization Care Coordination Program are available on the [Web](#).

Veterans Day is fast approaching. This year our nation begins the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. More than 9 million men and women answered the call to duty. Today, more than 7 million Vietnam Veterans live among us with approximately 123,000 Vietnam-era Veterans in Oregon and 208,000 in Washington. To honor the service and sacrifice of these brave men and women, Willamette National Cemetery is hosting a **Vietnam Era 50th Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony on Sunday, November 8, 2015, at 1:00 pm**. Everyone is invited and I hope you can join the VA in celebrating the service of this proud group of Veterans.

Thank you for your service to our country and it is an honor for us to care for you.

In Service to Veterans,

Joanne M. Krumberger

VETERANS TOWN HALL

VAPORHCS & VBA Portland Regional Office Veterans Town Hall and Claims Clinic - Nov. 9, 5 pm in Vancouver (See pg. 2 for details)



VETERANS TOWN HALL

VAPORHCS & VBA Portland Regional Office Veterans Town Hall and Claims Clinic - Nov. 9, 5 pm in Vancouver

**Join also by video teleconference at the Bend, Salem, N. Coast, West Linn, Hillsboro and
The Dalles CBOCs**

VAPORHCS and VBA Portland Regional Office directors are co-hosting the 1st fiscal year 2015 Veterans Town Hall and VBA Claims Clinic.

Please share the word about this quarterly event.

Please visit us on [Facebook](#) or the [VAPORHCS Web Events Calendar](#) for all the details.

~~-VAPORHCS-~~

WHO?

- Veterans, family members and media representatives are invited

WHAT?

- **Veterans Town Hall**—5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
 - ⇒ Get the latest updates from the Directors of VAPORHCS and VBA Portland Regional Office, ask questions, speak to staff
- **Claims Clinic**— 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
 - ⇒ Speak to VBA specialist about your specific claims issues or questions
 - ⇒ Talk to VAPORHCS Patient Advocates about your specific health-related issues or questions.

WHERE?

- **Vancouver Campus**, Columbia Room, Building 11, 3rd Floor, 1601 E. 4th Plain Blvd. Vancouver, WA 98661
- Join by video teleconference at the Bend, Salem, N. Coast, West Linn, Hillsboro and The Dalles CBOCs

WHY?

- To get informed, ask questions, provide feedback about VA-related topics or issues.

Questions?

Call us at (503) 402-2975 or email us

VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov

Please contact us if you need a sign language interpreter for the event..

Medication take-back events at the VA!

For Veterans, family members, staff and our community

Vancouver Campus

When: Thurs. October 22, 2015 - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: Outside the pharmacy on the 1st floor of Bldg. 11,
VA Vancouver Campus, 1601 East Fourth Plain Blvd, Vancouver,
WA 98661

All medications must go into a pre-paid postage envelope provided by the pharmacy on the day of collection. Mailboxes will be provided outside of Bldg. 11 for your convenience



Portland VA Medical Center

When: Tues. October 27, 2015 - 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: Atrium, VA Portland Health Care System
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd. Portland, OR 97239

How to prepare your meds for the drop box:

- Consolidate all pills by putting them into a sealed sandwich baggy .
- Make sure that liquids are in a tightly sealed, leak proof container.
- Sorry, but **we cannot accept SHARPS.**

Items NOT acceptable for deposit

- thermometers
- sharps/syringes
- IV bags
- bloody or infectious waste
- hydrogen peroxide
- aerosol cans
- Inhalers
- EpiPens

Acceptable items for deposit

- prescription medications & samples
- over-the-counter medications
- vitamins
- pet medications
- medicated ointments
- liquid med
- Controlled substances ☆

☆ Vancouver ONLY

***All donations are anonymous**



Sponsored by GEMS Committee, VA Police, Pharmacy, Portland Police, and the Drug Enforcement Agency. Questions, Contact GEMS Coordinator, 503-220 -8262 ext. 55417.



Million Veteran Program: A partnership with Veterans

VA Portland Healthcare System recently enrolled its 11,000th Veteran volunteer for the MVP



VA Press Release; VA's Million Veteran Program hits 400K Milestone

Program Expected to be Among World's Largest Databases

October 8, 2015

WASHINGTON - The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) [Million Veteran Program \(MVP\)](#) has enrolled its 400,000th Veteran volunteer, squarely putting it on track to become one of the world's largest medical databases, linking genetic, clinical, lifestyle and military-exposure information, with the goal of learning more about the role of genes in health and disease.

"We are proud to see the progress being made in MVP, and we are confident the knowledge gained through this research will have a very tangible and positive impact on the health care that Veterans and all Americans receive," said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. "We applaud our Veterans participating in the program. The selfless sacrifice they are making will allow researchers to gain valuable, important information."

How to be a [Volunteer participant](#) for the MVP at VAPORHCS:

At Portland VAMC:

- Veterans can schedule an appointment by calling toll-free 1-866-441-6075.
- Walk-in— MVP is located about 100 feet to the left of the main welcome desk when entering the front main entrance (Atrium) on the 1st floor

At Vancouver Campus

- 1st and 3rd Thursday at Bldg. 11 outside the pharmacy.

At Hillsboro CBOC

- 2nd and 4th Thursday in the 3rd floor conference room .

Veterans who volunteer for the program donate blood, from which DNA is extracted, and periodically fill out surveys about their health, health-related behaviors and military experiences. They also consent to having authorized researchers access the information in their VA electronic health record, and to being re-contacted for future research opportunities. All information, genetic and otherwise, is kept secure and de-identified. Samples and data are coded; no names, birthdates or social security numbers are shared.

MVP, in operation at more than 50 VA medical centers nationwide, is already the largest database of its type in the United States. Data collected through MVP are available to researchers for use in approved studies, to include posttraumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, substance use disorders and heart and kidney disease.

MVP is a part of the Precision Medicine Initiative announced by President Obama earlier this year. The initiative aims to move health care forward into an era in which disease prevention and treatment will be tailored to individual patients on the basis of their genes and other factors.

"VA is thrilled to be working closely with the White House and other federal partners on the president's Precision Medicine Initiative," said VA Chief Research and Development Officer Timothy O'Leary, M.D., Ph.D. "We are committed to making precision medicine a reality for Veterans and the nation."

For more information about MVP and VA research in general, visit www.research.va.gov.

VAPORHCS

Upcoming Events at VAPORHCS

Please visit us on [Facebook](#) or the [VAPORHCS Web Events Calendar](#) for all the details.



Eating Health for Parkinson's Disease

Where: Portland VAMC Auditorium

When: Oct, 23 at 10 a.m.

Call to register: (503) 721-1420

Details on [Facebook](#) or the [VAPORHCS Web Events Calendar](#) for all the details.



Taps for Babies: Child Loss Awareness Health Fair and Dialogue

Where: Portland VAMC Auditorium

When: Oct, 23 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

For more information contact (503) 220-8262, ext. 57025

Details on [Facebook](#) or the [VAPORHCS Web Events Calendar](#) for all the details.

VA Portland 9D Ward Remodel Ribbon Cutting

Where: Portland VAMC, Bldg. 100, 9D Ward

When: Nov. 10, 10 a.m.—10:30 p.m.

VA Portland Movie Muster

Where: Portland VAMC Auditorium

When: Nov. 11, 9 a.m.—3 p.m.

Movie Play Times:

Kelly's Heroes (1970) - 9:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Music Within (2007) - 11:45 a.m. to 1:15 pm

Crimson Tide (1995) - 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.



There are many more event and classes for Veterans at the VA!

Go to the VAPORHCS [Facebook](#) or the
[VAPORHCS Web Events Calendar](#) for all the details.

Get your flu shot at the VA

A VA facility near you is offering shots for Veterans



It's time to get your flu shot!

The Annual Influenza (Flu) Immunization Drive began September 15, 2015, in the VA Portland Health Care System Atrium of the main hospital and at your local VA health clinic. The walk-in flu clinic in the main hospital is open from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm, Monday to Thursday, except holidays. For local clinic hours, please call the telephone message line at 503-808-1923, and press the number for your clinic.

You also can get your flu shot at a local [Walgreens Pharmacy](#) (subject to availability; other restrictions may apply). If you have other health insurance, tell the pharmacist that you get your care at VA, and show your VA ID card. Veterans must use Group Code #5933XBAYV. More details are available on the Web [here](#).

You do not need an appointment to get a flu shot at a VAPORHCS walk-in flu clinic or a Walgreens Pharmacy. Veterans with scheduled medical appointments at any VA facility can ask for their flu shot at that time.

Why should you get a flu shot each year?

Influenza or "the flu" is caused by a virus and can be a serious infection. The flu can be prevented or at least made less severe by getting a flu shot. The best time to get a flu shot is as soon as the vaccine becomes available in September. However, getting a flu shot later still will protect you from the flu.

The flu spreads easily from person to person. The infection can be mild, but it also can cause severe illness or death. Certain people are at greater risk for severe illness if they get the flu. This includes older persons, young children and pregnant women; people with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, asthma or heart disease; and people who live in places like nursing homes.

All persons aged 6 months and older should get a flu shot, including persons with minor egg allergies. For most people with minor egg allergies, the benefits of getting a flu shot are greater than the risks of getting the flu. If you are allergic to eggs, please tell your health care provider so that special precautions can be made.

Other things you can do to avoid getting or spreading the flu:

- Wash your hands often;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- If possible, stay home when you are sick; and
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

For more information about dates, times and locations of walk-in Flu Vaccination Clinics...

- ... please call the hotline at **(503) 808-1923**, and press the number for your clinic.
- If you get your flu shot outside the VA or Walgreens, please leave us a voice mail message to let us know at (503) 273-5225.

The flu shot is safe and it works. While it is not 100% effective in preventing the flu, if you get the shot and still get the flu, it is usually far less serious than if you did not get the shot. Sometimes there are side effects from the shot that may be mistaken for the flu, such as a sore arm, body aches or a slight fever.

Protect yourself, the ones you love, and others around you by getting a flu shot this year.